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Disarmament Commission

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New York

Chairperson: Mr. Rosselli ..... (Uruguay)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): After three weeks of deliberations on the substantive agenda items by the two Working Groups, the Commission is now approaching the final stage of its work for the present session. Therefore, we must consider and adopt the reports of the subsidiary bodies and the Commission's draft report to the General Assembly. As planned, this meeting of the Committee of the Whole will be devoted to general consideration of the reports of the Working Groups, as contained in documents A/CN.10/2007/CRP.3 and CRP.4, and the draft report of the Commission, in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2, which have been distributed to delegations.

We shall first take up the reports of the Working Groups, as contained in documents A/CN.10/2007/CRP.3 and CRP.4. We shall consider them individually, seeking members' comments. Later, at the plenary meeting, the reports will be formally introduced by the Chairmen of the respective Working Groups.

The Committee of the Whole will now take up the draft reports of the Working Groups. Are there any comments with regard to document CRP.3, which contains the draft report of Working Group I?

I see that no delegation wishes to comment on draft report CRP.3. We shall therefore now turn to document CRP.4, which contains the draft report of Working Group II. Does any delegation wish to comment on that draft report?

Mr. Rodríguez Zahar (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): With regard to CRP.4, the secretariat has already been notified that there is a mistake in the second line of paragraph 2. It should read as "with the consent", instead of "with the consensus".

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We shall now consider the draft report of the Disarmament Commission, which is contained in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2.

Does any delegation wish to take the floor to comment on the draft report? Do delegations perhaps need more time to consider it?

Mr. Pardeshi (India): I would like to draw the Chairperson's attention to CRP.3, which contains the draft report of Working Group I.

If I recall correctly, we did not agree to insert the phrase "The Working Group noted" in paragraph 12. If I recall correctly, the paragraph began with "It is the Chairman's view that his working paper will be a basis". I stand to be corrected by delegations and the secretariat as to whether we agreed on that formulation.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I have consulted briefly with the secretariat and the Chair of the Working Group. They have both told me that the Group did in fact agree on the text as it appears in CRP.3. That is the information available to me. The representative of India appears not to agree.

Mr. Pardeshi (India): I apologize for taking the floor again. My delegation does not share that understanding. I would ask whether the Chair of

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Working Group I would like to clarify this matter. We are prepared to listen to him. But that is not the understanding I had that day.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegations of Indonesia and Italy have asked for the floor. If those delegations do not object, I would first like to ask whether the Chair of Working Group I would like to make any clarifications.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): I am deeply concerned about this situation, and I have taken note of it.

I would like to recall that the wording that has been retained was kept as it was because the same delegation that has taken the floor to challenge the paragraph as it is now worded did not want it included in the text in the way that delegation has phrased it today. That delegation said that the report was not prepared in order to record the views of the Chair, but to convey the views of the Group. That was the reason that the delegation of Mexico proposed that we say "The Working Group noted the Chairman's view". I shall therefore not withdraw anything from the text of the draft report as it has been presented to the Commission.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Chair of the Working Group for that clarification.

Mr. Ruddyard (Indonesia): Speaking on behalf of my delegation with regard to the issue that has just been raised by our colleague from India, if my recollection is correct, at our last meeting, when we discussed the draft report of Working Group I, there was no agreement on "the Group noted". Indeed, since the time I raised the issue of the insertion of the Chairman's views into the Working Group report — as opposed to a report of the Chairman — we have achieved no agreement on the insertion of the words "the Working Group noted". That is my recollection of what took place during our discussion.

Mr. Cuculi (Italy): Unfortunately, the recollection of my delegation is different from that of our colleagues from India and Indonesia. I have the clear memory that there was a long discussion. The first paragraph proposed by the Chair of Working Group I, which stated, "it is the view of the Chair", was not acceptable to some delegations because, as the Chair of Working Group I has just said, it was maintained that this report is a report of the Group and should not state, as such, the views of a single officer, no matter how important that officer may be as Chair of Working Group I. So, it was said that a possible way out would be for the Group to "take note" of the views of the Chair of Working Group I as a statement of fact. We also had an extensive discussion on that point. When the gavel went down on this paragraph, it was the clear understanding of my delegation that the possible compromise could have been the language as it stands now.

Having said that, of course, my delegation went on record yesterday as saying that in a factual report there was full room for expressing the views of a limited number of delegations which may not have been the views of all delegations. I refer in particular to paragraph 10, as drafted. And my delegation went on the record, saying that by the same token it was also the right of the Chair of Working Group I to express his views. That was why my delegation supported, at the beginning, the language as initially proposed by the Chair of Working Group I. But, after the long discussion we had, I went out of the room under the clear impression that the possible compromise was the current language. Again, I may have misunderstood what happened yesterday, but that was the clear sense my delegation got from yesterday's long debate.

Mr. Rodríguez Zahar (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation fully agrees with what the representative of Italy just said and, indeed, with what the Chairman of Working Group I said. For its part, my delegation made this proposal as a compromise solution. It was our understanding that it had been accepted.

Mr. Shamaa (Egypt): My delegation's recollection of the last meeting of Working Group I, which was held on Wednesday morning, is that there was an extensive discussion on paragraph 12 of the Working Group report, as it appears in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2/Rev.1. Various proposals were made around that paragraph, and at the end of the day there was no consensus on any of them. Finally, according to our recollection — oral and written — the paragraph as it stands in CRP.2/Rev.1, reflecting the Chairman's view, is the text that was agreed upon. That is our recollection on that paragraph.

The Chairman: Not having been involved in the process, I myself have no recollection. We have a situation in which I would wish to inquire of the

delegations of India and Indonesia, which have a different recollection, whether they have a problem with the current formulation. If that is the case — apart from the fact that I do not understand how it was agreed — we will have to find a solution. I do not intend to restart the whole discussion, but I will observe that there were apparently two choices: one that said, "it is the Chairman's view", et cetera, and one that said, "the Working Group noted". Apparently there was a lengthy debate on this, and I would seek advice from delegations as to the appropriate formulation they would wish to see.

Mr. Pardeshi (India): I would like to draw attention to documents A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2 and CRP.3 and to point out how careless the approach has been. The cited paragraph in CRP.2 is different from the paragraph that appears in CRP.3. My point is that this was guided by certain motivations. For example, let us read from CRP.3 — and I would request delegations to keep CRP.2 open before them as well: paragraph 12 begins "The Working Group", while in the version in CRP.2 begins "Working Group I". Later the paragraph says the "working paper will", but the citation — included in CRP.3 — is missing in CRP.2. The version in CRP.2 then reads "will provide a basis", while in CRP.3 it says "will be a basis".

I am drawing the Commission's attention to the fact that there have been serious errors in the formulation of this paragraph. I think the two different versions of the same paragraph appearing in CRP.3 and CRP.2 suggest that there have been some motivated alterations.

Mr. Cuculi (Italy): I apologize for asking for the floor once again. I wish to address two different issues. The first relates to paragraph 12 as it appears in document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.3 vis-à-vis as it was originally, in CRP.2/Rev.1. If delegations are not comfortable with the wording used in CRP.3 as it stands now, my delegation, as it said on Wednesday, would be more than willing to go back to the original formulation of paragraph 12: "it is the Chairman's view that his working paper" and so forth. That would only confirm the feeling of many delegations that we could indeed have been spared the extensive debate we had yesterday on this point — and I hope that such a debate will be avoided today. Again, my delegation has no problem with going back to the old paragraph 12, as it was initially presented by the Chair of Working Group I.

Concerning the discrepancies between paragraph 12 of CRP.2, which is the draft report of the Disarmament Commission, and CRP.3 as it currently stands, there are indeed some differences of which we have become aware thanks to the intervention of my Indian colleague. I would not go that far, but it is my personal feeling that the changes were deliberately made, so we all know the kind of pressure under which the Secretariat and subsidiary staff work. So I think that it could be possible to reconcile the two texts with the version that was discussed yesterday, with the clarification as to whether it is the group that takes note of the Chair's view or whether it is the Chair's view. But I would be reluctant to engage in a long discussion at this point.

The Chairman: Before I call on other representatives who wish to speak, I would wish to seek the guidance, particularly of the representative of India.

I am reading paragraph 12 of CRP.3, which says: "The Working Group noted the Chairman's view in his working paper" and that it "will be a basis for further deliberations for the formulation of consensus recommendations at the conclusion of the Commission's three-year examination of agenda item 4 at its substantive session in 2008".

I read paragraph 12 on page 8 of CRP.2. It is almost identical, with an editorial change to the effect that "Working Group I noted", which is basically the same thing as saying "The Working Group" because it is reporting here. And there is a change in from CRP. 3, where it says "agenda item 4 at its substantive session in 2008", from CRP.2, which says "at its 2008 substantive session". That is not quoting; it is reporting. It is not a quote; it is reported language.

I am therefore personally puzzled because I do not notice any other difference, so I would beg the indulgence of the representative of India to guide me.

Mr. Pardeshi (India): As I understand, this should be the exact quotation, because the preface says that "the report of Working Group I reads as follows". In other bodies or disarmament forums, when a committee's report is reproduced in the report of a commission or the higher body, it has to be reproduced verbatim. That is the understanding of my delegation.

My question is: If it does not alter the substance, why was it done? That means that there has been some

serious error in the methods of work. That validates my point that that day there was no agreement on the insertion of the words "The Working Group noted". The point I am making by bringing up two version of the same paragraph is to validate my argument that this insertion has been done by the Chairman himself and that there was no agreement.

As explained by the delegation of Egypt, there were many formulations that day, but for the sake of flexibility, we expressed the readiness to endorse the formulation presented by the Chairman. This was not the formulation presented by the Chairman. This is the point my delegation is making. My delegation is prepared to go by the gentleman's agreement that we had on Wednesday. We had no difficulty with that, but we certainly have a difficulty in inserting things which were not agreed.

I hope I have clarified the position of my delegation and that this will be taken into account, as well as my request to the Chairman and the secretariat to provide explanations as to why it has been done.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of India has an understanding of what has occurred that is not necessarily shared by other delegations.

Mr. Brasack (Germany): Very briefly, it is obvious that there are at least two different recollections, one shared by Italy and Mexico, and the other by India, Indonesia and, if I understood correctly, Egypt.

I do not want to go into the issue of the differing recollections, but I think that if a solution is found, we should not tamper with, so to speak, or rearrange or redraft CRP.3. I think that should be untouched, in particular also in the light of the fact that the Chairman of that Working Group reconfirmed that view at this meeting. I also believe that, if there is a problem with the word "provide" in paragraph 12 of CRP.2, we could certainly take the wording from paragraph 12 of CRP.3, which says the paper will be "basis". We could just delete the word "provide" and then the text would be similar, but if we change things, CRP.2 is still a draft text and we therefore have the possibility to synchronize it.

But in my view, we should leave CRP.3. It was adopted and confirmed by the Chairman of that Working Group, and some delegations hold the view that this was a text that was agreed on. It was a very difficult negotiation on that item, so we should try not to reopen it.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I apologize for having arrived late to the meeting. I also wish to express our pleasure at seeing you, Sir, presiding over this meeting.

My delegation is extremely surprised by the fact that we now have before us a document in CRP.3 that, in paragraph 12, differs from the language that we agreed on in the Working Group. That is of special concern when we consider the fact that paragraph 12 was agreed following a very intensive and extensive process of negotiation. I wish to make my delegation's position quite clear. Cuba is not prepared to accept paragraph 12 as it appears in CRP.3, since that was not the paragraph that we negotiated and agreed on in the Working Group.

I also have a comment to make with regard to paragraph 8 of CRP.3. During the discussions in the Working Group, my delegation made a proposal to amend paragraph 8. The proposed amendment was accepted by the Group, but the language that now appears in CRP.3 does not reflect what we agreed in the Working Group. Specifically, in the Working Group my delegation proposed the following wording:

(*spoke in English*)

> "At the 9th and 10th meetings of the Working Group on 23 and 24 April, preliminary discussions took place on specific elements contained in the different papers submitted by the Chairman, as well as other papers submitted by delegations and groups of delegations."

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I wish to stress that that was Cuba's proposed text, but it is not the language that appears in paragraph 8. My delegation therefore believes that paragraph 8 should reflect the language that was adopted, and not a different draft.

Mr. Hashmi (Pakistan): I have only a brief comment. I promise you, Mr. Chairman, that I will not enter into procedural discussions. I just have a few thoughts to share with the Commission.

My delegation recognizes the need for the Commission and its members to be precise and to ensure that everything is reflected in the way it was

agreed; that is a very fundamental point. But I think that precision is not the only objective that we in the Commission are seeking. We had hoped, as we indicated, that all delegations would try to focus on substance, not on semantics. I wish we had utilized the time we spent on procedural discussions to address the substance of the issues with which we were faced. But, of course, we chose only to have discussions; we did not deliberate. That is what the Commission is supposed to do, and it just goes to show how deep the divisions are among Member States concerning both procedures and methodology, and, of course, on the substance.

I will conclude by saying that we hope that the Commission does not revisit the debate in which it has been engaged since 2006, and we very much hope that we will start focusing on our substantive work, which is to deliberate on substance, not focus on semantics.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Let us see if we can clear up the situation.

Let us start with paragraph 12 of CRP.3, which is an exact reflection of the one contained in CRP.2. The problem with CRP.2, as stated by the representative of India, is that its text is not identical in that respect. So let us determine which wording should be used in paragraph 12 of CRP.3.

Mr. Pardeshi (India): I am sorry to take the floor once again. The first point is that paragraph 12, as reflected in CRP.3, is not the paragraph as it was agreed. The secondary question relates to its synchronization; that is the second point. The point is, we should agree first on CRP.3 and then on the exact reproduction of that language in CRP.2. The problem is that paragraph 12 is not the agreed text.

The Chairman: I wanted to address exactly that, and that is what I thought I said in Spanish. What I meant was that the question of CRP.2 is only a reflection of the disagreement on CRP.3. What I wished to do was to address paragraph 12 of CRP.3. It seems to me that there are two options here. Option number one is to retain the formulation as is, but certain delegations object to that. Option number two is to revisit the text and draft something different, which, apparently, could involve simply going back to the text that read "it is the Chairman's view", and so on.

My question is — apart from recollections and procedures and so on — is the membership satisfied with a paragraph 12 that would read: "It is the Chairman's view that his working paper will be a basis" and so on, as contained in CRP.3? If that is the case, we have solved the problem.

Mr. Shamaa (Egypt): Paragraph 12 as it appears in CRP.3 is not the paragraph that was agreed at the last meeting of the Working Group. But I wish to raise another point, the one raised by the representative of Cuba with regard to paragraph 8. I just want to add something; I am not going to enter into a discussion on that issue. But I think that it is essential to take a decision and have an exact reflection of what has been agreed. What happened with respect to paragraph 8 requires that we go thoroughly through the text of the draft report.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to come back to the issue of paragraph 12. After that we can address the issue of paragraph 8.

Concerning paragraph 12, I understand that there would be consensus in the Room for paragraph 12 to read: "It is the Chairman's view that his working paper" and so on, as the paragraph reads in CRP.3. If that is the case, paragraph 12 therefore will read, in its entirety:

> "It is the Chairman's view that his working paper (A/CN.10/2007/WG.I/WP.4) will be a basis for further deliberations for the formulation of consensus recommendations at the conclusion of the Commission's three-year examination of agenda item 4 at its substantive session in 2008."

I see no disagreement. That is solved.

Turning to the second issue, paragraph 12, page 8, of CRP.2 will repeat exactly — verbatim — what has been agreed with respect to paragraph 12. The secretariat will therefore reissue this, correcting the formulation. In that context, I thank the representative of India, and I thank all representatives for their understanding and for having resolved that issue.

The representative of Cuba raised another problem pertaining to paragraph 8. But I do not want to go here into an exercise of recollection. We have an issue: one representative says that he cannot live with the paragraph as is, so I will have to seek the views of the membership as to whether the formulation of paragraph 8 read out by the Cuban representative is satisfactory. If I am not mistaken, that paragraph,

according to the proposal of the representative of Cuba, should read:

> "At the 9th and 10th meetings of the Working Group, on 23 and 24 April, preliminary discussions took place on specific elements contained in the different papers submitted by the Chairman as well as on other papers submitted by delegations and groups of delegations."

Does the membership agree to that formulation?

I see no objection.

We have thus agreed on that paragraph. Therefore the issues related to paragraphs 8 and 12 have been resolved, and I am grateful to the membership for their cooperation.

Are there are comments on document CRP.3?

As no delegation has requested the floor, it is my understanding that the Committee of the Whole is satisfied with document CRP.3. We have had no comments on CRP.4 and we have had no comments on CRP.2, apart from the matter raised by the delegate of India. We will make sure that whatever correlated changes may be needed will be done. The Secretary tells me that the text of paragraph 8 in CRP.2 will also be taken verbatim from CRP.3.

I will then take it that the Committee of the Whole has considered and adopted these documents, I mean, we will adopt them at the plenary, which will come right after us.

We have finalized the consideration of the documents. The delegations of Mexico and of Saudi Arabia have requested the floor.

Mr. Rodríguez Zahar (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to state that it does not accept what occurred after Mexico's statement in the final meeting of Working Group II last Wednesday, 25 April. My delegation, in full exercise of its rights that day, proposed an amendment to paragraph 2 of the report of the Working Group. The amendment dealt with issues related to application of the rules of procedure, and that situation led to consultation with the Department of Legal Affairs. However, one specific delegation attempted to disqualify Mexico's proposal, calling it "not serious" and "indecent" — I repeat, "not serious" and "indecent".

My delegation would like to express its most vigorous rejection of the use of this type of language, which Mexico feels is totally unacceptable. We believe that the exchange of opinions and the presentation of proposals within the Organization should never lose the fair and respectful character that has always typified such exchange.

Mr. Al-Sudairy (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Since this is the first time that the delegation of my country is speaking, I am pleased to congratulate you, Sir, on your chairmanship of this important meeting, which demonstrates your standing and that of your country. We also appreciate and commend the efforts of the Office of Disarmament Affairs, in preparing for the work of this meeting. We reviewed with interest the unofficial document which you have presented to this meeting and the amendments made to it, which include many new positive points.

During the meeting held in Geneva, the Kingdom submitted a report, which was issued as an official United Nations document, concerning particular measures to support the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in response to Part I of the Final Document of the sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In this context, my Government continues to affirm the concerns set out in that report, most notably the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. This issue has been promoted by the General Assembly since 1974 and has been adopted in consensus resolutions since 1980.

Security and stability in any region cannot be achieved through the possession of weapons of mass destruction, but can be achieved through ongoing cooperation among States and by seeking to achieve development and progress and avoiding the race for the possession of these terrible weapons. Therefore, Israel's possession of nuclear weapons is a major obstacle to the achievement of security and stability in the region.

Consequently, all of Israel's justifications for possessing and developing weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons in particular, clearly contradict all its claims regarding its desire for peace with the peoples and States of the region. Real peace must be built on trust and on demonstrating good intentions among the States and peoples of the region

and on ending oppression, occupation and the perpetration of heinous crimes. It is not built on possession of nuclear weapons or the threat of using them and imposing the policy of fait accompli and hegemony that will not only be a source of worry and threat for the people of the region but will also threaten international peace and security.

In this regard also, my country has repeatedly demonstrated its readiness to respond quickly to all calls for international peace and stability, as indicated in the report it submitted to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The report was prepared in accordance with paragraph 4 of that resolution and was issued in an official document.

Also in this context, the permanent representative of Saudi Arabia to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) sent a letter to the Director General of the IAEA with a letter from the Government of the Kingdom authorizing him to sign the safeguards agreement and the small quantities protocol. The signing in fact took place. It is also worth mentioning that the Kingdom last year signed International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and it is one of the States targeted by terrorism.

My country's Government is following developments that resulted from the adoption of resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) regarding Iran's nuclear programme, which are still unresolved. This is a cause for concern. On the other hand, it is important to encourage the Iranian side to continue its cooperation with the IAEA in the context of those resolutions.

My country's Government hopes that Iran will continue its positive cooperation and to move forward in this direction, which would constitute a step in the right direction for achieving security and stability in the Gulf region, which is part of the system of international security and stability. We should not deny the right of States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in accordance with the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

On a similar issue, regarding North Korea's nuclear capabilities, my country's Government welcomes the positive results achieved in the meetings of the Six-Party Talks. We are hopeful that the agreement will be implemented and that stability and security will be restored on the Korean peninsula.

The twenty-seventh summit conference of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Riyadh on 10 December 2006 asked the Secretary-General of the GCC to prepare a joint study on such technical uses of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes as electricity and desalination. The Secretary-General's proposal was warmly welcomed by the Director General, and the two sides have agreed to continue their consultations in the future.

Peace and stability in the region and the world may not be achieved through efforts of some States to possess weapons of mass destruction, but rather through cooperation, understanding, respect for the rights of others and refraining from imposition of hegemony and preferring self-interests over common interests. The gradual reduction of nuclear weapons will be a positive sign for a promising future for all humanity.

In conclusion, the Government of my country reaffirms that eliminating nuclear weapons represents the only guarantee against their use and the threat of their use. It also believes that the fears of many countries that do not possess nuclear weapons should be seriously taken into account in the light of the continued instability in the Middle East and the growing dangers arising from recent events in the region. That may be achieved by developing a binding international instrument that guarantees safety and stability of States that do not possess nuclear weapons. Tangible measures to build trust and enhance the security of those States must be taken.

Mr. Shamaa (Egypt): I would just like to refer to document A/CN.10/2007/CRP.2, entitled "Draft report of the Disarmament Commission". I have a question about paragraph 9, under the section entitled "Organization and work of the 2007 substantive session". It states there that Working Group I held two informal pre-session meetings, on 20 February and 19 March, and 11 formal meetings, from 11 to 25 April. However, when paragraph 10 refers to the work of Working Group II, it mentions only that the Group held 11 meetings, without specifying whether they were formal or informal.

I think that there might be a need just to correct the appellation for these meetings. I am not sure whether the term "pre-session meetings" is in

accordance with the agreed working methods of the Commission. If they were informal consultations, perhaps the report should call them that. According to our understanding, the substantive session takes place between the dates specified for it. Intersessional or pre-session meetings can be labelled informal consultations, but I am not sure about the term "pre-session meetings".

The Chairman: It seems that if we refer to the informal meetings as informal consultations rather than as pre-session meetings, that would resolve the problem. And we would make sure that the rest of the documents read accordingly.

It is my understanding, then, that the membership would agree to changing the expression "pre-session meetings" to "informal consultations".

Mr. Vasiliyev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): My delegation wishes to commend you, Sir, for the effective manner in which you have been working, resolving issues that otherwise would have required several additional meetings.

I have no substantive amendments to the text that we are now discussing, CRP.2. Perhaps the only amendment that I would propose would be in paragraph 2 of the report of Working Group II as it appears on page 8 of CRP.2. As I understand it, paragraph 2, which states that Mr. Santos assisted the chair "with the consensus of the Group", is referring to consent, not consensus. Unfortunately, consensus was not the case in either Working Group.

The Chairman: I am grateful to the representative of the Russian Federation for pointing out that issue. It was stated earlier that the expression used should be "consent", not "consensus". The text will be corrected accordingly; I appreciate the fact that the representative raised that point.

Mr. Bouchaara (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): For my delegation, this is not the time for the right of reply, but rather for congratulations and thanks, and it is in that spirit that I should like to take the floor.

My delegation has committed a serious faux pas, and I wish to apologize. After three weeks of work by the Disarmament Commission, I realize that I had neglected to tell you, Sir, how satisfied we have been with your chairmanship and how grateful we are to our friends and colleagues in the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States for having contributed a chair of such quality to lead our work. Thus, I wish to pay public tribute to you.

I should also like to commend the excellent chairmanship of Working Group II, on confidence-building measures, which was a source of great satisfaction and pride for me. Of course, my thanks go also to the chairmanship of Working Group I, on nuclear issues, which was courageous and carried out difficult work in quite sensitive circumstances.

Mr. Carlos Duarte — who presided over Working Group II — and I have something in common. Several years ago, we had the honour and privilege to work with a great ambassador from Mexico in Geneva, during the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. I am speaking of Ambassador Antonio de Icaza, who was a mentor and source of inspiration for me personally.

The Moroccan delegation also provided similar support for the outstanding Mexican chairmanship during the work of the First Committee two years ago, particularly in its efforts to revitalize the work of the First Committee. I should also recall that when Mexico took the excellent initiative to organize a conference of States parties and signatories to treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, my delegation spared no effort in ensuring that the final document of that conference would be adopted by consensus.

Every time Mexico has supported multilateralism, it has found Morocco at its side, and it will continue to find us there. If Mexico had been in the situation that our friend and colleague Mr. Duarte was in several days ago, the Moroccan delegation would not have hesitated for a moment; we would have supported Mexico with the same frankness, conviction and sincerity.

I associate myself with the comment by my colleague from Mexico that it is important to focus on the real aspects. I am in full agreement. What is important for my delegation is not procedural points, but substance. And it is extremely important that we be able to preserve the atmosphere of confidence that has always prevailed in our work. We have noted in recent years that it has become increasingly difficult to adopt substantive reports. We noted with great sadness during the present session that even procedural reports were giving rise to difficulties. We are concerned by those developments, and we hope that all countries that

believe in multilateralism will seek to ensure that we can emerge from this impasse.

Mr. Rodríguez Zahar (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I just wanted to thank the representative of Morocco for his very kind comments concerning Mexico's foreign policy.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): As there are no other delegations requesting the floor, I propose that we proceed to the 2182nd meeting of the Disarmament Commission.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.